The Priorities of Greek Foreign Policy Today

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This article provides a tour d'horizon of Greek foreign policy where four of its dimensions are assessed in depth. These include the Europeanisation of Greek foreign policy, relations with Turkey, the state of affairs in the Balkans and the Euro-Atlantic context. The author attempts to explain the impact of these aforementioned contexts by exploring the degree to which Greece has successfully defended its national interests, but he also warns of the need for adaptation to the new global threats that have particularly emerged since 9/11. These new 'functional' threats and concerns imply a readjustment of the regional approach to foreign policy that Greece has traditionally pursued.

Introduction

International relations have been undergoing a rapid transformation over the past few years, especially since 11 September 2001. As a result, the changes brought about by the end of the Cold War have been compounded by the consequences of 9/11, leading to a re-evaluation of the foreign policies of most states. The terrorist hits of 11 March 2004 in Madrid and 7 July 2005 in London complicate the ever-changing international environment as the dividing lines between western societies and the rest of the world seem to become more deeply embedded in a nevertheless ever more globalised world.

Greece is no exception to the rule. As with other European Union (EU) and NATO member states, the evolutions in the international order need to be assessed through the prism both of EU and NATO obligations and the international context. In the Greek context, however, the cleavages of the current period have not yet found their way in mainstream Greek political thinking. In other words, Greece (its polity and political elite) has yet to clearly identity itself fully with many of the norms, values and dangers that identify the West—and in particular its European component, which is best expressed by the EU. As an astute analyst and practitioner of Greek foreign policy has suggested, 'we need to prove that we really deserve to remain in the first category and the nucleus of progressive and democratic Europe' (Valinakis 1997: 36).

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At some stage after the fall of the Junta in 1974, Greece opted for membership in the European Communities and mobilised all its energies towards that end. The debate then was shrouded in terms of belonging—Greece belonged to the West and, therefore, it belonged to the European Commission (EC). This conscious choice had been challenged, and continues to do so, by a significant, albeit shrinking, vocal segment of public opinion, policy and military elite over the years as Greece has become more firmly entrenched in the EU camp. It goes without saying that the debate over the sense of belonging stems primarily from the country's perceived inability to counter what it judges to be a threat from its much bigger neighbour, Turkey, on its own. As a result, successive Greek governments have with varying degrees of success attempted to bandwagon onto wider alliance structures to address the country's security and foreign policy concerns. This has come at the logical cost of compromise on a variety of issue-specific fronts as well as political culture, which has neither been easy on the elite in power or public opinion at large that has been shaped over many generations on the ideals of Greek exceptionalism. It has also come with serious constraints on the economic front given the fact that Greece decided to apply for full membership in 1975 'without waiting for the full implementation of the Association Agreement with its transitional provisions extending over 12 or 22 years until 1984'[1] (Kazakos 1994: 3). This economic divergence between Greece and the rest of the EC/EU continued throughout the 1980s and the early 1990s (Pagoulatos 2003).

What sort of international actor is Greece? Greece is an actor belonging to the postmodern world of EU politics whose geography (and, by extension, political culture) binds it to a region where most if not all of its neighbours do not belong to it; aspire to join it but are wary of how to undergo the requisite transformation (Cooper 2003). Yet even Greece's anchoring in the EU took place because it was precisely touted domestically as a guarantor of the country's frontiers and interests where the term 'status quo' still plays a dominant part in the day-to-day psyche of foreign policy-making. It should be remembered that membership in the then EC that symbolised the West was sold by Constantine Karamanlis as being Greece's new 'Great Idea' (Megali Idea) (Koliopoulos & Veremis 2002: 311). The discourse of the virtues of membership during a polarising political debate between 1975 and 1981 (and beyond) 'focused principally on the political merits and ideological dimension of accession rather than on the practical decisions needed to absorb the shock of accession and transform the institutional and administrative system into flexible and effective instruments capable of responding to EU policy requirements' (Ioakimidis 1996: 36).

As a result, reform has become a catchword for all Greek governments since accession to the EC. This reformist and modernisation necessity has been reinforced and compounded by the systemic implications of globalisation that necessitate further structural changes. For Greece, the task is monumental given 'the need to overcome continual problems which characterise the Greek polity, and are rooted in the historical and political culture of the country: institutional centralisation combined with ineffective policy-making and implementation, intense politicisation of economic and social relations, an absence of stratagem, an overwhelming public sector, a weak paternalistic state and a ubiquitous network of clientilistic relations' (Mossialos & Mitsos 2000: 3).

To return to the question regarding the nature of Greece as an international actor, the aforementioned domestic realities obviously play a key role in the conduct of the country's foreign policy. The paradox of Greeks being among the most fervent supporters of the European integration process and the country's inability to improve its economic indicators at the rate of its European counterparts, as well as its perception of being perceived as the most difficult and problematic member, suggest 'an irreconcilable gap between the perceived enthusiasm of the Greek people and the Greek political elite for the EU, and the incapacity of Greek governments to behave in a *communitaire* fashion' (Pettifer 1996: 17).

Yet to blame the gap on Greek exceptionalism misses the point, or rather the reality, of the Greek context in that Greece is the only EU member state with pending border or territorial disputes. That is to say that while Greece is considered the laggard in terms of structural reforms, with the reasons for this lying in the historical and political culture of the country and beyond the purview of this paper, its at times problematic foreign policy priorities are related to the wider geographical and political context of its neighbourhood. In other words, there is a rationale explanation for Greece's foreign policy options. On the other hand, the relative weakness of Greece's socio-economic indicators could be said to play a role in the country not getting its point across to its allies and partners with regard its foreign policy priorities.

Yet the concern over revisionist claims along its northern and eastern borders has not precluded (or stalled) the development of the Greek polity into a modern society as in most other EU member states. Greek policy-makers and analysts cling to the notion of Greece as a status quo power because of the country's perceived insecurity along its borders, although, in many ways, EU membership has diluted this notion.

The gap between the ideal or what Greece would wish from its neighbours (and vice versa) and the reality of an unstable, albeit less so than in the recent past, neighbourhood and an ever-present and powerful Turkey with its internal political, social and military contradictions leads security planners to stress caution (Dokos 2003: 64). Thus, Greece, currently the eighth most populated member state of the EU-25 and its 10th oldest member, remains politically and economically weaker than it should be. Hence, while Greece's economic maladjustment 'at least partly explains the tensions that developed between it and both European institutions and partner countries, its volatile neighbourhood has also contributed to its being misunderstood' (Tsoukalis 2003: 322).

In terms of foreign policy today, we find ourselves at the beginning of a new defining period of Greek foreign policy that entails a reformulation of foreign policy priorities. In other words, the previous period, roughly dating since 1989 with the end of the Cold War, has come to an end and is being replaced by a more complex world order and a different regional context for Greece.

The international order is in evolution principally as a result of three factors over the past few years. These are the US election of 2000, which brought to power an increasingly unilateralist administration, the terrorist ramifications from 11 September 2001 and the American response to terrorism, which includes global anti-terrorist coalitions, wars in Afghanistan and Iraq (through the evolving notion of 'preemptive war').

As a result, the West finds itself in quest of a new definition or raison d'être—one that can assure the prevalence of a relatively stable and peaceful world order without compromising democracy and modernity. Across the Atlantic, the idea that 'the mission defines the coalition' seems to be the order of the day. This concept is an anathema to the security consideration of every small and medium-sized country, especially one such as Greece, which seeks alliances to assume some of its security concerns.

Consequently, Euro-American relations have become frayed (the US response to 9/11 having become Europe's wake-up call). This is all occurring at a time when the EU finds itself in the midst of its own systemic revolution, with the biggest enlargement in its history a *de facto* reality and a severe difference of opinion over the future of its Constitutional Treaty. Simultaneously, a nascent European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) and an embryonic European arms industry also define the EU's willingness to transcend its civilian power label and become a 'soft' global power with its full use of its economic, diplomatic and military instruments.

For Greece, the European experiment has manifestly buried the debate as to whether the country belongs to the West or the East and is willy-nilly transforming its economy via its integration into the wider European market to compete into a globalised one. The fortuitous benefits of European integration and the security derived from being a member of the EU for nearly a quarter of a century have had implications on the foreign policy front as well. There has been marked improvement in Greek–Turkish relations with the magnetic pull of the EU for Turkey playing a key role in this process. The EU factor has also proved instrumental in the integration of Cyprus and is a key catalyst in the eventual resolution of the Cyprus question. Finally, the magnetic pull of the EU is a key component of the ongoing stabilisation of the wider Balkan region and the eventual integration of all Balkan countries.

The twin processes of enlargement and the remaking of the world order merit careful study on the part of the Greek foreign and defence establishment as they impact directly on the country's foreign and security policies. In the Greek case, a number of developments particular to the country's historical legacy and its geography play key roles in any assessment of the country's foreign policy priorities in the immediate and mid-term.

What are these priorities?

1. The continued Europeanisation of Greek foreign policy.
2. The extent of policy embededness with regard to the rapprochement or the strategic détente with Turkey.
3. The implications of the post-enlargement situation and how it impacts on other key aspects or concerns of Greek foreign policy, such as Balkan stability.
4. The wider ramifications of the post-Iraq situation and how these are reflected in the Euro-Atlantic context.

The Europeanisation[2] of Greek Foreign policy

The Europeanisation of Greek foreign policy is one of the key tenets of Greece's international relations. As such it deserves a special mention as the Europeanisation of

national foreign policies is an ongoing process in all EU member states. It stems both from the impulse to join the EC in the late 1970s as well as from the impact of joining in 1981. It comes to represent as noted above Westernisation, modernisation as well as normalisation for Greece.[3]

Greek foreign policy has changed significantly since the country became the EC/EU's 10th member state in 1981. The country's identity that it belongs to the West rather than the East or to nobody[4] was reaffirmed with the integration into the EU, and is gradually being consolidated with the passage of time in all aspects of the Greek polity whether these are political, economic, social or religious.

Politically, the fourth Greek Presidency of the EU (first semester of 2003) clearly found the country in a different position from the previous ones.[5] Long gone were the epithets by the international press that characterised the country as 'the sick man of Europe' or 'the black sheep of the European Union'. The praise the government received for its handling of its last Presidency during a period in which the Union found itself divided over the war in Iraq is indicative of the qualitative change in the country's political fortunes.

Economically, the past decade can be deemed to be the decade of convergence—macroeconomic convergence with the adoption of the Maastricht criteria and the joining of a externally imposed disciplinary mechanism that makes the cost of divergence extremely prohibitive. One should not discount in this regard the socio-political consensus[6] regarding the objective of participating in the nucleus of European integration, in particular the European and Monetary Union (EMU) (Pagoulatos & Vlavoukos 2004).

In the cultural and religious realms, the Greek position in favour of some reference to the ideals of western civilisation and to the Christian roots of the European Union in the preamble of the Constitutional Treaty, as was favoured by most EU member states, represents a cultural bridging with the other member states that were concerned with the accession of an Orthodox country in the EC in 1981. The imminent accession of Orthodox Bulgaria and Romania coupled with the May 2004 accession of Cyprus bridges also contribute to bridging the religious gap.

One should also not discount the overwhelming support of Greek public opinion in favour of the European orientation for the country. On the eve of the last Greek Presidency of the EU, Greek public opinion was overwhelmingly in favour of enlargement and the European Constitutional Treaty. The vast majority of Greek public opinion considered Greece's participation in the EU as beneficial for the country, trusted the European Commission, and supported the Euro as well as the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the ESDP (European Commission 2002).

With regard to the CFSP, Europeanisation expresses the absorption of the purposes, the decision-making process as well the procedures and the institutional demands of the CFSP deriving from the foreign policy of a member state. This readjustment of a country's foreign policy does not imply the abandonment of national concerns. In other words, with regard to the CFSP, 'Greece has come to terms with the notion that its foreign policy objectives can coexist and indeed can be advanced by deepening policy and defense integration at the EU level. From this particular perspective, Greece can justifiably be

described now as an "orthodox" member states of the Union leaving pejorative descriptions like "heretical" and "awkward" well behind it' (Ioakimidis 2002: 110–111). This implies that Europeanisation is the adjustment to western or European standards.

More specifically in the area of foreign policy, Europeanisation can be considered to be a strategic tool for the promotion of national interests. This is of particular relevance to the study of Greece as a unique case among EU member states. Writing in 1994, Ioakimidis and Kazakos list the following reasons to explain Greece's uniqueness: Greece is a peripheral country that to this date still has no common borders with other EU member states. It is situated in an unstable region. It feels threatened by Turkey.[7] It underwent a different historical and political development pattern. It possesses a Christian Orthodox religion and culture. It is economically weak. EC accession remained a controversial issue for some time. (Ioakimidis & Kazakos 1994). One can thus conclude the following: The political nature of Greek membership as a security guarantee (and to consolidate democracy); its controversial nature (domestic consensus was slow in developing); and the importance of external or international factors (Stavridis 2003: 11).

While for the period between 1981 and 1993 membership in the EC 'served Greece both as a diplomatic lever and a constraining mechanism' (Couloumbis 1994: 191), since 1996 Europeanisation has come of age to the degree that the country's foreign policy is bound to the context of Europeanisation, which is perceived to be a panacea for eventually resolving or impacting on all of Greece's key foreign policy concerns. Through the prism of Europeanisation (and EC/EU membership) and its magnetic pull for its neighbours in the North (the Balkan states) and the East (Turkey), Greece can thus apply itself in promoting the EU perspective for its neighbours in the hope that over time it will reduce tension and lead to the resolution of outstanding disputes.

Relations with Turkey

Within the purview of the Europeanisation of its foreign relations, Greece has sought security providers both in the EU and NATO against the Turkish threat (Tsakonas & Tournikiotis 2003). The year 2004 was a crucial year for Greece and its foreign policy as Greeks went to the polls and pronounced themselves in favour of a change of government. The new government has been called upon to deal with the resolution of the Cyprus problem, assuring Cyprus' entry into the EU and establishing the proper criteria for Turkey's EU course. Cyprus officially acceded to the EU on 1 May 2004. In a last gasp attempt to reunite the island before this deadline, Kofi Annan had reactivated talks between the Cypriot leaders based on his long-standing peace plan. This process is vital for Cyprus's immediate future but is also part and parcel of a more complicated diplomatic game in the Eastern Mediterranean in which the stakes include bilateral relations between Greece and Turkey and the latter's prospective candidacy for EU membership. The talks failed to bring about an accord as the Greek Cypriot voters failed to ratify the deal in a referendum vote on 24 April 2005. Nevertheless, the passage of time has demonstrated that Cyprus' membership has strengthened its negotiating position and it is less malleable to external pressure than it was in the past.

Turkey's continued denial in recognising Cyprus seems to present it with a serious impediment on its road to EU membership.[8]

Therefore 2004 was a key year in reaching closure on certain key issues in Greece's foreign relations. It was a year of deadlines that marked the end of the so-called 'Helsinki cycle'; a set of criteria laid down at the Helsinki European Council of December 1999 defining the conditions for Cyprus's accession and Turkish candidacy of the EU with immense implications for Greece.

At Helsinki, Turkey was considered a candidate for accession. It was bound to contribute to the search for a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem, and urged to resolve any outstanding territorial disputes and other related issues with Greece; if failing to do so, these should be brought before the International Court of Justice at the latest by the end of 2004 in order to promote their settlement. The December 2002 Copenhagen European Council also significantly advanced Turkey's cause by stating that the EU would open accession negotiations with Turkey without delay in December 2004 provided Turkey meets these conditions.

Since 1999, Greece has pursued a 'peace offensive' with Turkey, aimed at reducing tensions over the Aegean, and predicated on actively supporting Turkey's European future as a basis for advancing the cause of rapprochement between the two countries. This was a risky undertaking if considering that the two countries almost went to war as recently as 1996 when Turkey challenged Greek sovereignty over an Aegean islet. In 2004, the questions that Athens was called to deal with were: What if there is no short-term resolution of the impasse in Cyprus? and How does Greece meet the challenge of rapprochement with Turkey if there is a deadlock in EU–Turkish relations? European support for Greece was considered forthcoming but only on the basis of a clear and proactive strategy emanating from Athens that would ultimately ensure the safeguarding of Greek interests. Cyprus and Turkey may have become EU concerns—which can only be favourable to Greek interests—but Athens had to advance in 2004 a strategy for post-2004.

Other European considerations further clouded these issues. For instance, 'big bang' enlargement had and continues to have complex implications for the future of the EU that point in the direction of a long delay for future enlargements. One thing is clear—the stalled EU constitutional debate, in conjunction with the digestion of the current enlargement of the EU, will make potential accession negotiations with Turkey all that more contentious. In turn, whether the Erdogan government in Turkey will be able to maintain public support in favour of EU membership should the EU decide, as it seems to indicate, that the monitoring of Turkey's adoption of the evolving acquis will be constant and extensive, remains to be seen. This suggests a certain degree of uncertainty that Greece must be ready to address through the formulation of a new strategy.

In other words, the only viable option would be to upgrade its 'peace offensive' with Turkey with concrete proposals and commitments to address the territorial and other substantive differences between the two in the Aegean and elsewhere. The purpose would be to assure Ankara that, come what may, Athens remains committed to the continued improvement of relations between the two sides with the proviso that

Turkey continues to undergo the rigorous monitoring of its reform and its 'European-isation' by the EU.

The Helsinki European Council of 10–11 December 2001 produced the great leap forward in EU–Turkish relations by welcoming 'recent positive developments in Turkey as noted in the Commission's progress report, as well as its intention to continue its reform towards complying with the Copenhagen criteria'. The Council therefore concluded that 'Turkey is a candidate State destined to join the Union on the basis of the same criteria as applied to the other candidate States'.[9] Apart from paragraph 12 of the Helsinki Council conclusions, which laid down the criteria for membership, Turkey is bound to paragraphs 4 and 9(a). Paragraph 4 refers to the 'principle of peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the United Nations Charter', while urging candidate states 'to resolve any outstanding border disputes and other related issues. Failing this they should within a reasonable time bring the dispute to the International Court of Justice. The European Council will review the situation relating to any outstanding disputes, in particular concerning the repercussions on the accession process and in order to promote their settlement through the International Court of Justice, at the latest by the end of 2004.'

The reference here is obviously to Turkey's disputes with Greece. Paragraph 9(a) expresses the European Union's 'strong support for the UN's Secretary General's efforts to bring the process [comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem] to a successful conclusion'. The Copenhagen European Council of 12–13 December 2003 also significantly advanced Turkey's cause as it defined the parameters of the EU's future relations with Turkey. More specifically, the conclusions of the Copenhagen Council state that:

> The European Council recalls its decision in 1999 in Helsinki that Turkey is a candidate State destined to join the Union on the basis of the same criteria as applied to the other candidate States. It strongly welcomes the important steps taken by Turkey towards meeting the Copenhagen criteria, in particular through the recent legislative packages and the subsequent implementation measures which cover a large number of key priorities specified in the Accession Partnership …

The EU encouraged Turkey to pursue energetically its reform process. If the European Council in December 2004, on the basis of a report and a recommendation from the Commission, were to decide that Turkey fulfiled the Copenhagen political criteria, the European Union would open accession negotiations with Turkey without delay.[10]

Both the Helsinki and Copenhagen Councils were a prelude to the Brussels Council of December 2004 that altered EU–Turkish relations fundamentally and qualitatively. Both the international and the domestic contexts are equally important for Turkey. It should be remembered that the Helsinki European Council was also groundbreaking in that it formally launched the ESDP, a necessary component of the EU's embryonic crisis management capability and a point of intensive negotiations with Turkey as the ESDP became a key concern for EU–NATO relations. Also the Copenhagen Summit made Cyprus' accession to the EU a *de facto* reality by May 2004, whether the Cyprus problem is resolved or not. Since Copenhagen, the Iraqi crisis has shaken US–Turkish relations to the core, thereby simultaneously challenging Turkey strategic dependence

on the United States and vice versa as well as fundamentally bringing to the fore the necessity of greater strategic thinking on the part of the EU both as it widens its frontiers and its neighbourhood.

For the EU, economics, political criteria and strategic are the priorities of its Turkey policy. The major obstacle seems to be Turkey's 'unproductive and unstable economy, and the related threat that with accession to the EU, millions of Turks in search of jobs and higher wages would emigrate to Germany and elsewhere in Europe' (Teitelbaum & Martin 2003: 102). Turkey's sizeable population of nearly 72.3 million growing at a rate of 1.5 per cent annually, coupled with a low per-capita income (per-capita Gross Domestic Product [GDP] is at about 5200 or 22 per cent of the EU average), a large agricultural work force (about 40 per cent of the population), large regional disparities, high inflation (the average annual consumer price inflation was 69.9 per cent during 1997–2001, with large fluctuations between 101 per cent year-on-year in January 1998 and 33 per cent in February 2001), low foreign investment (0.8 per cent of the GDP on average during 1997-2001), a high public sector debt (35–40 per cent of the Gross National Product) and a slow rate of privatisation, suggest that Turkey's structural adjustments are monumental (Commission of the European Communities 2002; Larrabee and Lesser 2003: 54–56). The EU's reluctance to admit Turkey is understandable given the aforementioned and the slow progress in fulfilling the political criteria membership and its troubled relations with Greece and Cyprus. Part of the problem is the slow realisation on the part of the Turkish elite that the Southern enlargement of the 1980s resulting in the entry of Greece, Spain and Portugal 'reflected an important shift in the EC's approach to enlargement' as it 'gave priority to political considerations—particularly the desire to stabilize democracy in these countries—over economic concerns' (Larrabee & Lesser 2003: 48–49). Also Turkey's neighbourhood is a cause for concern. The land border to the northeast with Armenia, Georgia and Turkmenistan is 610 kilometres long; that with Iran is 454 kilometres long, and that with Iraq is 331 kilometres long. In the south lies the 877 kilometre border with Syria. Turkey's borders on the European continent consist of a 212 kilometre frontier with Greece and a 269 kilometre border with Bulgaria.

This also led to the slow 'Europeanisation' of differences with Greece over the Aegean and Cyprus, which the EC/EU had to take into account both because these differences slowed Turkey's march into the EU (as many member states have had and continue to have doubts about the practicality and viability of Turkish membership) and a reticence or inability to import bilateral differences between two NATO members and close US allies. Turkey's relations with Greece and its use both of military and diplomatic tactics in its disputes over the Aegean and Cyprus have complicated its pursuit of EU membership. For Greece, there has been a paradigm shift in its foreign policy towards Turkey since 1996 away from confrontational towards cooperative politics as the efficacy of confrontation came under scrutiny. (Triantaphyllou 2001: 56–79). In Turkey's case, 'the "success" of confrontational politics has prevented the development of a new consensus on the consequences and costs of such policies' until now, with Cyprus's accession with or without a resolution of the island's division (Loizidis

2002: 438). The continuing violations of Greek airspace and the daily dogfights with armed aircrafts and Greece's decision to protest in May 2003 to the European Commission for the first time are indicative of the distinctive approaches of the two countries in their foreign affairs.

Taking into account the aforementioned, the 17 December 1994 Brussels European Council gave Turkey the provisional green light to begin accession negotiations on 3 October 2005, on the proviso that Turkey would 'sign the Protocol regarding the adaptation of the Ankara Agreement, taking into account of the accession of the accession of the ten new Member States'. In other words, this lays the ground for a *de facto* recognition of the Republic of Cyprus. Furthermore, Turkey was bound by a number of other provisions and restraints.

Paragraph 20 stressed the importance of good-neighbourly relations and the need to resolve outstanding disputes with member states. The allusion to Greece is clear:

> The European Council, while underlining the need for unequivocal commitment to good neighbourly relations welcomed the improvement in Turkey's relations with its neighbours and its readiness to continue to work with the Member States concerned towards resolution of outstanding border disputes in conformity with the principle of peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the United Nations Charter. In accordance with its previous conclusions, notably those of Helsinki on this matter, the European Council reviewed the situation relating to outstanding disputes and welcomed the exploratory contacts to this end. In this connection it reaffirmed its view that unresolved disputes having repercussions on the accession process should if necessary be brought to the International Court of Justice for settlement. The European Council will be kept informed of progress achieved which it will review as appropriate.

Paragraph 21 took note of the resolution on Turkey adopted by the European Parliament on 15 December 2004. This resolution is particularly tough regarding the state of play of Turkey's accession. Paragraph 23 refers to the evolving acquis under which Turkey's prospects will be judged. In other words, the message is that the EU's criteria are under constant evolution and that candidate states cannot expect the fulfilment of the Copenhagen criteria will suffice for them to become member states of the EU. The same paragraph makes reference to long transitional periods, derogations, specific arrangements or permanent safeguard clauses:

> Long transitional periods, derogations, specific arrangements or permanent safeguard clauses, i.e. clauses which are permanently available as a basis for safeguard measures, may be considered. The Commission will include these, as appropriate, in its proposals for each framework, for areas such as freedom of movement of persons, structural policies or agriculture. Furthermore, the decision-taking process regarding the eventual establishment of freedom of movement of persons should allow for a maximum role of individual Member States. Transitional arrangements or safeguards should be reviewed regarding their impact on competition or the functioning of the internal market.

Furthermore, it clearly states that the funds for Turkey's accession will only be available after 2014. Finally, the Presidency Conclusions clearly suggest that the negotiations are open ended and that, although the objective is accession, the strongest possible bond need be found (*sic* privileged or strategic partnership):

The shared objective of the negotiations is accession.

These negotiations are an open-ended process, the outcome of which cannot be guaranteed beforehand.

While taking account of all Copenhagen criteria, if the candidate State is not in a position to assume in full all the obligations of membership it must be ensured that the candidate State concerned is fully anchored in the European structures through the strongest possible bond.

Greece's input in the EU's conditions to Turkey has been fundamental. The accession of Cyprus to the EU has been instrumental in bringing about further changes in Greece's foreign policy vis-à-vis Turkey, in that the issue of decoupling is slowly coming to the fore. That is to say there is an emerging school of thought that considers Cyprus' accession to the EU 'liberates' Greece is pursuing a pro-détente policy with Turkey independently of the resolution of the Cyprus question. It can be considered a major success of Greek foreign policy that it did not succumb to external pressures and contributed to Cyprus' EU accession in spite of the no vote by the Greek Cypriots to the Annan Plan. The issue of whether the Annan plan is dead or whether it can continue to serve as the basis for a solution to the unification of the island provided as the Greek side wants the issue of security guarantees still remains to be seen. Nevertheless, the Republic of Cyprus has shown to date that it can withstand Turkish pressures within the EU framework. Whether the issue of decoupling is feasible and under what conditions remains to be seen, but its parameters need to be comprehensibly worked put. In other words, can the Greek–Turkish agenda be decoupled from the EU–Turkish agenda in that should Turkey's EU road stop or stall, the Greek–Turkish rapprochement continues?

For decoupling to become a viable policy option, a couple of scenarios apply. One option for Greece would be to continue with business as usual (support Turkey's EU bid and allow for the process of 'Europeanisation' to eventually take hold there). The second option would be to take a high-stakes gamble in order to resolve its disputes with Turkey, thereby necessitating a shift from a security-oriented logic to an interaction-based logic or a shift from a zero sum game approach to a win–win approach. Basically, the key is to assess how to maintain rapprochement or strategic détente between Greece and Turkey. If strategic détente is maintained then the (positive) decoupling between Cyprus and Greek–Turkish relations would be possible.

The issue of the economic dimension of the relationship needs to be properly assessed. Trade, energy, and other related issues have increased between the two sides. For example, while the volume of trade between the two countries was at US$857 million in 2001, the figure for 2004 has increased to US$1.9 billion. The number of Greek tourists has also increased significantly from 147,000 in 1996 to 393,000 in 2003 to 485,000 in 2004 (a 23 per cent increase over the previous year). In the energy sector there is cooperation in the field of electric energy, while in July 2005 a 300-kilometer natural gas pipeline between Bursa, Turkey and Komotini, Greece was inaugurated by the prime ministers of the two countries. The Greek–Turkish pipeline is expected to carry 11.5 billion cubic meters of gas per year once connections are made to other planned pipelines as demand for Caspian gas will expand in the coming years. There

has also been progress in terms of faster rail connections between the two countries; an increase in air connections, and so on. The question is when and whether the volume of economic relations will be able to reach a point of no return in that that any failure of strategic détente will seriously disrupt the economies of both countries so that it would be unthinkable for such a scenario to become a reality.

As Kostas Ifantis suggests in his contribution to this issue, while engagement is a priority for Greece it needs to maintain a high level of deterrence that would make the risk military escalation extremely high for Ankara. As Athens formulates its post-2004 strategy vis-à-vis Ankara, it also has to assess the following:

- The issues regarding Turkey's borders; that is, the number of hard and soft security threats (such as the threat of a nuclear Iran) and what Greece's stake is.
- The impact of transatlantic relations: should these deteriorate then Turkey could be faced with a strategic choice that could impact on Greek–Turkish relations. On the other hand, the problems in US–Turkish relations raise a whole new set of questions.
- The ability of the United Nations to overcome its myriad of problems and to regain its status as the guarantor of international norms and practices.

As Greece cannot afford to deal on its own with any Turkish belligerence on its own, the EU framework or perspective needs to be maintained. Greece cannot afford to choose the option of a brave isolation. Greece needs to consider its options should EU–Turkish relations stall. Can the rapprochement survive or will it fail as well should the aforementioned become a reality? Two attempts at decoupling are probably necessary: the first is between Greek–Turkish relations and the Cyprus question (Cyprus' EU membership facilitates this process); the second is the one between Greek–Turkish relations and EU–Turkish relations should the latter falter. If these are to hold, the benefits of further economic integration between the two countries need to increase. Also, there needs to be some focus on third areas where Greece and Turkey can work together—Balkans, Middle East, Mediterranean, and so on. Finally, a shift from a rights based to an interest-related foreign policy needs to become the order of the day.

The Balkans

The emphasis on Cyprus and Greek–Turkish relations has sidelined foreign policy objectives in the Balkans, and elsewhere for that matter, as the top priority for Greek foreign policy has been strategic détente with Turkey. The persisting instability in the Balkans either expressed via the continued uncertainty regarding Kosovo's future status or the tenuous implementation of the Ohrid Accord in the Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) is indicative of the need for Greek diplomacy to be concerned about developments along its northern borders. In a strategic environment that is increasingly complex, characterised by hard and soft security threats, some of which cut across traditional regional lines, Greece's position as a transregional actor needs to be emphasised.

The hard security threats from the North to Greece that prevailed during the Cold war have been minimised because today the EU perspective is the fundamental motor driving the foreign relations of Greece with its eastern and northern neighbours, and, to a great extent, vice versa. But should the European perspective not become a reality any time soon, especially for the Western Balkan states (Albania, FYROM, Serbia and Montenegro, and Bosnia-Herzegovina) and to a certain extent for Turkey, or should the process not be clearly defined, instability and all its accoutrements (lack of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), weak states, organised crime, etc.) will persist. Consequently, the key is closure for Greece on a number of issues related to its northern neighbours.

The issue is not whether the Western Balkan countries are moving towards EU integration, but the effect of the slow pace of accession on those countries. What are the implications for their reform process; for their reforming elite; for their publics and their expectations? The fear is that the EU's tough attitude could discourage Balkan reformers and play into the hands of precisely the corrupt and criminal elements that the EU is attempting to combat.

While the Thessaloniki Summit of June 2003 left a bitter aftertaste for the states of the Western Balkans as to their eventual integration into the EU as it met neither their expectations nor those of the Greek Presidency of the EU, later developments such as the current debate within the EU regarding enlargement (*sic* Turkey and Croatia's failure to meet the 17 March 2005 deadline to open accession negotiations) taint the future of the region even more.[11] As a consequence, the Western Balkans lie in a fog of uncertainty for the next few years. Thus, the states of the Western Balkans find themselves waiting for the EU to decide whether and how to proceed with their integration and accession or how to cope with their non-inclusion. Until then, they will continue to sap the EU's energies by keeping in place a deficient institutional edifice and a chronic inability to address unemployment and underdevelopments. The EU's 'yes but' approach leads one to the conclusion that the EU is reticent to use the instruments of integration to the fullest.

Traditionally characterised by political instability and turmoil, the Balkans continue to be plagued by these factors today as they are a source of instability and concern, to the extent that creating a stable security order in the Balkans is likely to remain a major challenge for western governments in the coming decades. While hard security threats resulting in all-out wars seem to be have subdued, softer security concerns such as economic underdevelopment in areas with strong aggrieved minority populations, weak civil societies, corruption, growing criminalisation, and a lack of strong democratic institutions continue to pose serious threats to political stability in the region.

Another element contributing to the region's uncertainty is the role of the United States. The continued US presence in Southeastern Europe (SEE) seems to reflect its global security post-9/11 strategy rather than concern for the region as it aims to place forward bases in Bulgaria and Romania and it is the motor behind the Adriatic Charter.[12] Although a concerted approach between NATO (through which US interests are expressed) and the EU has existed since July 2003, as well as consensus on letting the EU increasingly take a lead role, the growing US exceptionalism or militarism has led the EU to the adoption of a threat-driven security strategy that was adopted in December 2003 (Triantaphyllou 2003b).

As a result, a damper or a hold has been placed on the EU's integration efforts—therefore putting on hold its credibility or status. This in itself suggests the limits of 'Pax Europea' as the EU was to date (a civilian power with a small but growing Common Foreign, Security, and Defence Policy) a harder entity with at the very least clearly defined external borders until (if ever) it resolves the problems associated with governance at the supranational level with 25 or more states.

These developments all pose serious dilemmas for Greece's foreign policy, which as in the case of Turkey supports the spread of 'Europeanisation' to the entire region. Almost a quarter of a century has passed since the country became a member of the EU and it still has no land borders with any other member state. The imminent entry of Bulgaria and Romania partially helps but it does not necessarily address the country's economic ties with the core of the EU's member states as the principal transport, telecommunications and energy project pass through the states of the Western Balkans. As a result, the former Yugoslav space acquires strategic importance for Greece as these road and other links pass through FYROM, Kosovo, Southern Serbia, and Serbia proper. Beyond the concerns over soft security horizontal issues and the interplay between the United States and the EU, there is apprehension as to whether the political edifice of the region can hold.[13]

For this reason, Greece has slowly but surely began to come clean on the pending status issues in the Balkans such as Kosovo by keeping a position of equidistance between Belgrade and Serbia, as the March 2005 visit of the Greek Prime Minister to the region suggests.[14] In its new role, Greece has sought a role within the Contact Group and has managed to draw praise for the United States that it is America's most reliable partner in the Balkans.[15] Similarly, Greece has been seeking of late to resolve the pending issue of the name of the FYROM as the latter's future relationship with the EU is due to be decided upon in late 2005. Greece's acceptance as a basis for negotiations of the set of ideas by Matthew Nimitz, the UN Secretary General's special envoy on the issue in April 2005, is the first official admittance since the issue broke 15 years ago that Greece accepts the premise of a mutually acceptable name that includes the term 'Macedonia' in some form.[16] This more realistic perspective on developments in the Balkans is a sign of maturity for Greece's foreign policy and an indicator of a newfound ability to define its interests without taboos.

In other words, the definition of the country's interests in the region includes the following commitments and questions:

- The promotion of an EU perspective. What is the interplay between Turkey's EU prospects and those of the countries of the Western Balkans? If a lack of a clear EU commitment persists, is there another policy that should be promoted such a special partnerships? How?
- Should it fear a Greater Albania or a Greater Kosovo?
- What should the Greek position on Kosovo be? Should it have one? How to influence the decision regarding Kosovo's status by the powers that be (UN Security Council, Contact Group)?

- How to account for the emergence of smaller states in the region if these emerge (Kosovo, a split between Serbia and Montenegro, etc.) without damaging the country's interests?
- What types of coalitions can it promote with current EU and future EU member states that have an interest in the region?
- How to resolve the FYROM name issue now?

Greece is a soft power in the Balkans via the promotion of economic development programmes, economic investments and the acquis communautaire. The paradox is that Greece can become a hard power as the EU becomes a hard power through its myriad of military and political operations in the region. Then, this limited hard power role needs to become better defined and exploited as well (be it through its active participation in KFOR, the future NATO enlargement in the region, the promotion of Southeast European Brigade (SEEBRIG) etc.), in parallel with its soft power potential. The conjuncture at this stage works because relations with the United States vis-à-vis the Balkans has markedly improved, EU policy in the region is based on the Thessaloniki Agenda of June 2003, which was actively promoted by the Greek EU Presidency of the time, Greece is a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the period 2005–2007, and its economic diplomacy is under deployment. To maintain and improve its ability to influence policy toward the region that does not harm its national interests, Greece needs to improve its credibility as a promoter of the region's transformation.

The current debate in the Balkans is between European integration and failed states. Kosovo represents the debate in the more conspicuous way. How to integrate these failed states or how to transform them even if their integration is delayed is a top priority if the persisting instability is to be overcome. As a stable, relatively rich neighbour, Greece has no choice but to play a leading role in contributing toward the region's change.

The Euro-Atlantic Context

One steady element regarding Greece in the Euro-Atlantic environment (the West) is that it is fully integrated in the European pole while it maintains a foot in the Atlantic pole as well. Given the fact that Greece cannot influence the fluidity in transatlantic relations, it needs to invest both in improving its relations with the United States and becoming more integrated in the EU's hard core. This correlation with the West can be considered to be an ongoing process related to how the outside world sees Greece and how Greece perceives itself. In other words, the issue of perceptions is important. Long gone are periods such as those of 1992–1995 when the Greek position regarding the Macedonian issue or its policy with regard to Serbia were considered to be deviating from that of most, if not all, other western allies. Gradually Greece adapted its policies in support strategic détente with Turkey, allowing for the latter's road to the EU to be open, not standing in the way of NATO's Kosovo campaign of 1999, and playing a crucial role in limiting the split within the western world during its Presidency of the EU in the first half of 2003 as a result of the US-led war in Iraq.

Consequently, conventional wisdom suggests that the nexus of transatlantic relations is the only context possible because it possesses a strong security focus that contributes to stabilising Greece (and to a certain extent containing the perceived Turkish threat) and allowing it to joining the EU's hard core (such as European and Monetary Union (EMU)) and promoting soft power policies in the Balkans and elsewhere. To be able to do so, there is a need to understand how the new regional security system is evolving and to adjust to it accordingly. Do Greek policy-makers have a clear idea of the threats, their sources and their contexts (regional, inter-regional, extra-regional)?

Relations with EU institutions have been developed through the prism of the Turkish threat. Both the EU and NATO act as strategic security providers (their interplay is evident in the context of the Greek–Turkish rapprochement) given the fact that Greece is a vulnerable EU member state with regard to US policies. The challenge of change as a result of the ongoing systemic transformation is tremendous. In fact, on the one hand, the 'policy implications are that the longer the relationship between Turkey and the EU remains overshadowed by uncertainties, the more the US remains "the only and undisputed" arbiter in an essentially balance of power game' (Ifantis 2004: 256). On the other hand, the impact of the changes since 9/11 in US foreign policy from one based on regions and regional threats to one based on functional issues (terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, other emerging security threats, etc.) have yet to be worked out in Athens as Greek defence is still territorially based. In other words, how does Greece react in an environment where Washington does not assess Greek foreign policy based on the regional context but on functional one?

Thus, even if US policy is slowly readjusting toward greater multilateralism and working within the UN system as a consequence of the developing Iraq quagmire, fundamental changes in the global environment and the role of the Euro-Atlantic dimension have already taken place. The issues of dealing with terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction as well as addressing the requisite transformation of the Greater or Wider Middle East form part and parcel of the international agenda. The differences in terms of threat assessment and threat perception between the EU and the United States are being reduced with each new terrorist attack on European soil, thereby giving weight to the functional approach to dealing with threats. In this context, the maintenance of the Euro-Atlantic context as well as being a full and active partner both within the EU and NATO remain priorities for Greece, as both these organisations continue to provide the context both of securitisation (in particular as a bulwark against the Turkish and other threats) and transformation (the 'Europeanisation' of its neighbourhood) for Greece.

Options for the future

On the one hand, Greek foreign policy finds itself in post-rehabilitation phase where it is attempting relatively successfully to win the perception battle with its allies. On the other hand, it attempts to deal with its security challenges through the prism of the ever-growing functional threats without jeopardising the priorities it has set for stabilising and 'Europeanising' neighbourhood (Turkey and the Balkans). It is thus

imperative that Greece be maintained as an upmarket product in foreign policy terms if it is to have the requisite input (of a mid-sized state) within the Euro-Atlantic context. The continuing détente with Turkey and its range of activities such as the visit of the Turkish Prime Minister to Greece in 2004 and the forthcoming visit of his Greek counterpart to Turkey obviously help. Likewise, Greece's participation as a non-permanent member of the Security Council of the Security Council for 2005–2007 is also important. Other key Greek contributions include the successful hosting of the 2004 Olympic Games, its continued leading role in assuring that the countries of the Balkans are on the path of European integration, and an increased interest in developments in the Wider Middle East.

It is thus essential that Greece capitalises on the aforementioned synergies in order to become better integrated within both poles across the Atlantic. Greece cannot afford to choose the option of a 'brave isolation' should its relations with its neighbours (Turkey in particular) turn sour. It needs to deal with these from a position of firm entrenchment within the Euro-Atlantic framework.

What are Greece's interests? This question needs to be assessed within the constraints and context within which Greece and its foreign policy operates. Policy priority setting is of the essence. Schematically these should include the following:

Priorities:
- Maintaining credit within the EU and increasing the country's political input and weight.
- Dual decoupling—need to avoid isolation on the resolution of the Cyprus question as well as finding ways to maintain Greek–Turkish détente if EU–Turkish relations stall.
- Maintain the highest possible profile in the Balkans by playing a leading role in formulating and implementing the West's policy for the region.
- Maintaining a positive image in Washington as a key and reliable partner.

Risks or threats:
- Post-rehabilitation phase does not last.
- Domestic constraints such as political instability, deterioration of economic indicators.
- Potential actions by Turkey that would undermine public support for rapprochement.
- Problem of maintaining support in Washington when domestic public opinion is opposed to US policy(ies).
- Problems of Greece keeping up with deepening processes of the EU such a structural reform, the Lisbon agenda, the ESDP, and so on.

Needs:
- Adapting more rapidly to the post-9/11 environment.
- Addressing the core or essence of policy toward Turkey.

- Addressing the various functional and horizontal concerns plaguing the Balkans (organised crime, small arms, etc.).
- Improving qualitatively the relationship with the United States.
- Promoting and playing a greater role in the Mediterranean and the Middle East.
- Optimising the capacity of the country's foreign policy institutional framework.

The challenges, thus, for Greece in terms of its foreign policy are great but not insurmountable. The need to adapt to the needs and threats of the new millennium is a *sine qua non* if the countries national interests are to be defended. The only way forward is for Greece to tie in regionally based concerns with the functional concerns of the United States and the EU by contributing energetically in a manner that takes into account the full potential of the EU-25's 10th oldest, and its eight most populated, member state.

Notes

[1] This meant the overlooking of some economic and social realities, which implied the limited ability of the country to combine homogeneously with the economies of the other member states in terms of the size of its agricultural population, the structure of its agricultural industry and its relatively weak industrial base.

[2] According to R. Ladrecht, 'Europeanisation can be described as an incremental process re-orienting the direction and shape of politics to the degree that EC political and economic dynamics become part of the organisational logic of national politics and policy-making' (1994:69). According to K. Featherstone and G. Kazamias, Europeanisation implies the 'adaptation to the (west) European norms and practices' (2001:4).

[3] The references to Westernisation, modernisation and normalisation can be attributed to Spyros Economides of the London School of Economics.

[4] Christos Sartzetakis, a former President of the Hellenic Republic, had suggested that Greece has no brethren anywhere and that she is alone to fend for herself.

[5] The previous Presidencies were during the second semester of 1983, the second semester of 1988 and the first semester of 1993.

[6] Except for the Communist Party of Greece (KKE), which represents less than 10 per cent of Greek voters.

[7] As a result, spending on military expenditures is disproportionately high. While in 1994 Greece spent 7 per cent of the GDP in military expenditures, on overage over the past few years the figure stands at 4.1 per cent of the GDP per annum without taking into account the payments on loans. Other EU member states spend between 1.2 and 3.8 per cent of the GDP on defence, while the trend is on spending less. See *Eleftherotipia*, 21 May 2005.

[8] In Early August 2005, both the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of France have made terse statements in this regard. See, for example, *Le Monde*, 3 August 2005.

[9] Presidency Conclusions, Helsinki European Council, 10–11 December 1999.

[10] Presidency Conclusions, Copenhagen European Council, 12–13 December 2003.

[11] On the results of the Thessaloniki Summit, see Triantaphyllou (2003a).

[12] A sort of pre-NATO membership group that includes Croatia, Albania and FYROM.

[13] The vertebral column of peace in the Balkans comes in the form of three internationally brokered accords—The Dayton Accords that put an end to the war in Bosnia in 1995; the Rambouillet negotiations and UN Security Council Resolution 1244 that determined Kosovo's current status in 1999; and the Ohrid Agreement of August 2001 that put an end to interethnic conflict in FYROM. The Belgrade Agreement of March 2002 aimed at defining the

transformation of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia into Serbia and Montenegro can also be considered part of the region's architecture.

[14] For more on the visit see the website of the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs (http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/europe_southeastern/balkans/Karamanlis_W_Balkans.html).

[15] Greek Foreign Minister Petros Molyviatis paid an official visit to Washington, DC in March 2005. For more on the visit see online (http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2005/43821.htm).

[16] For a detailed account of the state of affairs between Greece and FYROM, see Kofos and Vlassidis (2005).

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